

Task Number	3	Task Name	Historical Analysis – Xerxes: Good King/Bad King?
Course	HSC Ancient History	Faculty	HSIE
Teacher	Miss K Magriplis	Head Teacher	Mr J Selwood
Issue date	Week 4, Term 2, 2023	Due date	Friday 20th June, 2025, 3:15pm (Week 8, Term 2)
Focus (Topic)	Xerxes	Task Weighting	30%

Outcomes

AH12-1 accounts for the nature of continuity and change in the ancient world
AH12-2 proposes arguments about the varying causes and effects of events and developments
AH12-3 evaluates the role of historical features, individuals and groups in shaping the past
AH12-6 analyses and interprets different types of sources for evidence to support an historical account or argument
AH12-8 plans and conducts historical investigations and presents reasoned conclusions, using relevant evidence from a range of sources
AH12-9 communicates historical understanding, using historical knowledge, concepts and terms, in appropriate and well-structured forms

Task outline

Part 1: Research and source analysis (15 marks)

You will analyse three given sources and three sources based on your own research (six sources in total). The sources you include based on your own research must include one ANCIENT and one MODERN source – the third source can be of any type you choose.

For each source, your analysis should include:

- a brief overview of the source
- the values and limitations of the source as evidence for studying Xerxes
- any other relevant information.

The analysis of each source should be concise; aim for between 100-125 words per source. Your total word count for the analysis should not be greater than 700 words.

The given sources to be used are attached.

Part 2: Good King / Bad King – Making the case for or against Xerxes (15 marks)

Using AT LEAST FOUR of the sources from Part 1, make an evaluation (judgement) that Xerxes was either a good OR a bad king. Choose the best sources to support your evaluation. Write 500 words.

Bibliography

Include a correctly and consistently formatted bibliography of sources used for both Part 1 and Part 2. The bibliography is not included in the word count.

Presentation style

Present your Part 1 source analysis, Part 2 evaluation and bibliography as a Google Slide or PowerPoint presentation. Each analysis should be on a new slide. Your evaluation can be presented over 3-4 slides with appropriate images. Present your bibliography on 1 or more slides at the end.

See over the page for the marking guidelines.

Ancient History Assessment Task 3 – Marking Criteria

Part 1

Outcomes	Outstanding (13-15)	High (9-12)	Sound (5-8)	Basic (4-7)	Limited (1-3)
AH12-1 AH12-6	Source analysis demonstrates thorough and accurate understanding of Xerxes with sophisticated interpretation of both the given sources and well-chosen evidence from relevant additional sources	Source analysis demonstrates accurate understanding of Xerxes with clear interpretation of both the given sources and evidence from relevant additional sources	Source analysis demonstrates sound understanding of Xerxes with some interpretation of both the given sources and evidence from additional sources	Demonstrates some understanding of Xerxes through examination of sources; may include additional sources	Makes limited reference to sources and/or Xerxes
AH12-8	Bibliography and sources demonstrate a wide range of research with a consistent form of referencing	Bibliography and/or sources demonstrate a wide range of research with a consistent form of referencing	Bibliography and/or sources indicate some research; may use a consistent form of referencing	Bibliography included/attempted	May include a bibliography
AH12-9	Source analysis is concise and clearly addresses the values and limitations of given and chosen sources; uses appropriate historical knowledge, concepts and terms	Source analysis is mostly concise and addresses the values and limitations of given and chosen sources; uses appropriate historical knowledge, concepts and/or terms	Source analysis may be concise and addresses the values and/or limitations of the given and/or chosen sources; uses some historical knowledge and/or concepts and/or terms	Source analysis contains basic understanding of the given sources; may attempt to use terms/concepts	Source analysis may attempt to describe the given sources and/or information

Part 2

Outcomes	Outstanding (13-15)	High (9-12)	Sound (5-8)	Basic (4-7)	Limited (1-3)
AH12-2 AH12-6	Judgement uses well selected evidence to support argument for OR against Xerxes as a good or bad king, including integration of evidence into a well-structured response	Judgement uses evidence to support argument for OR against Xerxes as a good or bad king, using evidence into a structured response	Some use of evidence to support response; may use it to support the argument for OR against Xerxes as a good or bad king	May use evidence in response; may make some reference to Xerxes as a good and/or bad king	May make general statements about Xerxes as a good or bad king
AH12-3	Presents a comprehensive and reasoned judgement about the Xerxes as a king	Presents a reasoned judgement about Xerxes as a king	Presents some judgement about Xerxes as a king	Demonstrates some knowledge and/or understanding about Xerxes	Makes general statements about Xerxes
AH12-9	Judgement is logical, cohesive, sustained and uses appropriate historical knowledge, concepts and terms	Judgement is logical, cohesive presentation and uses appropriate historical knowledge, concepts and/or terms	Judgement is coherent and uses some historical knowledge and/or concepts and/or terms	Response contains basic historical knowledge; may attempt to use terms/concepts	Response includes minimal historical knowledge and/or terms

- All references and quotes must be attributed to sources.
- Bibliography – references should be included using a consistent form of referencing (suggest use of MyBib, Cite This For Me or similar).
- Plagiarism/use of generative AI will result in a ZERO mark.

Part 1: Research and source analysis

Source A: The Daeva Inscription (extract)

King Xerxes says: when I became king, there was among these countries one that was in rebellion. Ahuramazda bore me aid. By the grace of Ahuramazda I smote that country and put it down in its place.

And among these countries there was a place where previously demons (daeva) were worshipped. Afterwards, by the grace of Ahuramazda I destroyed that sanctuary of demons, and I proclaimed: 'The demons shall not be worshipped!' Where previously the demons were worshipped, there I worshipped Ahuramazda at the proper time and in the proper manner. And there was other business that had been done ill. That I made good. That which I did, all I did by the grace of Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid until I completed the work.

You who may live hereafter, if you should think 'Happy may I be when living, and when dead may I be blessed,' have respect for that law which Ahuramazda has established. Worship Ahuramazda at the proper time and in the proper manner. The man who has respect for that law that Ahuramazda has established and worships Ahuramazda at the proper time and in the proper manner, he both becomes happy while alive and becomes blessed when dead.

King Xerxes says: May Ahuramazda protect me from harm, and my house, and this land. This I ask of Ahuramazda. This may Ahuramazda give to me.

Reference: www.livius.org. (2004). Achaemenid Royal Inscriptions: XPh ('Daiva inscription') - Livius. [online] Available at: <https://www.livius.org/sources/content/achaemenid-royal-inscriptions/xph/>.

Source B: Dandamaev on Xerxes on the nature of the Persian invasion of Greece and Xerxes

What was the influence of the Persian-Greek wars on the Persians? According to a classical writer from the first century AD, Dio Chrysostomos, the Persians wrote in relation to these wars that 'Xerxes, having undertaken an expedition against the Greeks, defeated the Lacedaemonians at Thermopylae and destroyed the city of Athens. All who could not escape were enslaved. After having imposed tribute on the Greeks, Xerxes returned to Asia.' There is no doubt that the Persians (in any case, in their official tradition), did not regard themselves as being defeated, because the previously proclaimed objectives had been accomplished: Athens was taken twice; the Eretrians were taken away in captivity. The real objective to the war was of course different: under the pretext of a punitive expedition against Athens, the Persians wanted to occupy all of Greece. On Persian seals with depictions of the war with the Greeks, who are armed with shields and spears, the Hellenes [Greeks] are usually depicted as having collapsed to the ground, or fallen onto their knees ... To the Achaemenid empire, with its huge extent and enormous resources, the defeat in Greece had the character of minor set-back along the periphery of its realm.

Reference: M.A. Dandamaev (2023). A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire. BRILL, pp. 225-6.

Source C: Xerxes and Darius, relief from Persepolis, Apadana (north stairs)

